

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. In this Reply, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 2 and added new dependent claims 5 and 6.

The title of the invention has been amended to read --IMAGE SENSING APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR DESIGNATING AND ILLUMINATING A ZOOM AREA FOR AN IMAGE--, consistent with the Examiner's suggestion on page 2 of the Office Action. In view of this new title, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the title be withdrawn.

Claim Objections

In reply to the claim objections set forth on page 2 of the Office Action, the phrase "the image of a subject" in line 2 of each claim has been amended to read --an image of a subject--. In view of this amendment, Applicant respectfully requests that the claim objections be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. For at least reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims should be indicated as allowable.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1, 2, and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US2002/0093578 to Kowno et al. (hereinafter "Kowno") in view of U.S. Patent 6,522,360 to Miyawaki et al. (hereinafter "Miyawaki"). This rejection, insofar as it pertains to the presently pending claims, is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to an image sensing apparatus. The apparatus of claim 1 comprises: an image sensing device for sensing an image of a subject and outputting image data representing the image of the subject; a display control unit for controlling a display unit in such a manner that the image of the subject represented by the image data output from the image sensing device will be displayed on a display screen; a designating unit for designating an electronic zoom area in the image of the subject displayed on the display screen; a light-emission control unit for controlling a strobe light-emission device in such a manner that a part of the subject that corresponds to an image within the electronic zoom area is illuminated with strobe light, wherein the light control unit changes a light emitting angle of the strobe light-emission device based on the designated electronic zoom area; and a recording control unit for recording, on a recording medium, image data output from the image sensing device and data indicating

position of the electronic zoom area or image data representing the image within the electronic zoom area.

As stated on page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner's rejection of claim 1 is based on an interpretation of the "light-emission control unit," which the Examiner asserts as being written broadly enough such that:

...illuminating an entire sensed image, as disclosed by Kowno et al., fully encompasses illuminating a part of the subject that corresponds to an image within the electronic zoom area in the entire sensed image. In other words, since the electronic zoom area is designated within an image that is illuminated with a strobe/flash, any image in that electronic zoom area is also illuminated with the strobe/flash.

In this Reply, Applicant has amended the "light-emission control unit" element of claim 1 to specify that the light control unit changes the light emitting angle of the strobe light-emission device based on the designated electronic zoom area. Applicant submits that this claim amendment precludes the interpretation of claim 1 discussed above that forms the basis for the current obviousness rejection. More specifically, neither Kowno nor Miyawaki disclose or suggest the light-emission control unit element as currently recited in claim 1.

At least for this reason, Applicant submits that claim 1 and claims depending therefrom define over the asserted combination of

Kowno and Miyawaki. Furthermore, independent method claim 2 defines over this asserted combination based on similar reasoning.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

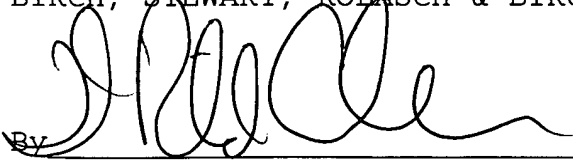
Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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